



F3/F5

THE OAMARU TOURISM PRECINCT: Decision-Making for Resilient Solutions Associated with Heritage, Earthquake-Prone Buildings

SEISMIC RISK AGAINST A VICTORIAN BACKDROP

The 2016 Building (Earthquake Prone Building) Amendment Act aims to improve the system for managing earthquake-prone buildings. The proposed changes to the Act were precipitated by the Canterbury earthquakes, and the need to improve the seismic safety of New Zealand's building stock. However, the Act has significant ramifications for territorial authorities, organisations and individuals in small New Zealand towns, since assessing and repairing heritage buildings poses a major cost to districts with low populations and poor rental returns on commercial buildings.

Oamaru lies in the Waikaki District in the South Island. It has a small but diverse tourism offering, largely focussed on heritage attractions including the Victorian Heritage Precinct, arguably the best collection of Victorian buildings in New Zealand. Waitaki District has approximately 695 earthquake-prone buildings, with estimated costs of up to \$180 million required to undertake just the initial assessment required to fulfil the requirements of the Act. The project has undertaken a collaborative approach with cross-flagship support and supervision by QuakeCoRE researchers, to understand the current heritage tourism product in Oamaru, and the progress of current local owners and authorities in undertaking seismic assessments within the tourism precinct. This has taken the form of open-ended semi-structured interviews of tenants, tourism stakeholders and property owners.

The upcoming phase of research will entail the application of a Decision Support Tool developed by Flagship 5 researchers in 2016 to assist tourism growth, visitor safety, building safety and costs associated with meeting the requirements of the Act. The project has relevance to the cross-flagship Alpine Fault case study, since a future Alpine Fault magnitude 8 earthquake has the potential to cause some damage in Oamaru.

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Heritage Analysis of the Oamaru Precinct to Inform Future Management and Upgrading of EQ-Prone Buildings::

"Setting means the area around and/or adjacent to a place of cultural heritage value that is integral to its function, meaning, and relationships. " (ICOMOS New Zealand Charter, 2010)

- Structures and Outbuildings
- Curtillage
- Accessways
- Streetscapes

Building Scale

- One Storey
- Two Storey
- Three Storey
- Four Storey

Oamaru Historic Area
(Designated Heritage New Zealand)

Regular/Irregular Gridded Historic Urban Layout
"Forrester and Lemon's compact groups of commercial buildings, densely concentrated... created a townscape that was unrivalled by that of any other borough of its size in New Zealand."

Conal McCarthy

Variation in Urban Grain
Stand-Alone, Row Buildings

"That is the biggest challenge on anything you're dealing with in the precinct: is you're not just dealing with the Council. If it was simple, if you had one entity that you were dealing with, that would facilitate growth: but you're not. And, these groups have a variety of different rules and agendas."

Heritage Tourism Precinct Interviewee

"Locals here can find the **quirkiness** different and difficult to process. Often people who were quite old fashioned want to keep it at arms length"

Heritage Tourism Precinct Interviewee

"Buildings that are lived in are the ones that endure, so **finding uses for these buildings is very important today.** That means **minimal damage to the fabric of the building** itself to accommodate the tourism need..."

Heritage Tourism Precinct Interviewee

"Wide are its streets, as if made plenty of room for stir and trade, Its buildings are mostly of pure white stone Fair and pleasant to look upon"

Anonymous, 1886

'Fire and Steam' Festival:
Oamaru Whitestone Civic Trust Precinct, 2017

Sumpter Wharf:
One of Five Historic Wharves, Port of Oamaru

Oamaru Breakwater:
Landing Point for Proposed Zipline

Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony



Itchen Street



Harbour Street



Tees Street



Thames Street



Thames Street



Thames Street

Varied Architectural Deployment of Local Limestone
to Generate Cohesive Streetscapes



Historic 'Civic' Typology

Courthouse (1863), Post Office (1864) Athenaeum (1867)

"...significance lies less in the quality of individual buildings...than in the way those buildings, together, construct a pleasing townscape."



Historic 'Commercial' Typology

Oamaru Harbour Board (1876) Criterion Hotel (1877)
Exchange Chambers (1876) Union Bank (1879)



Historic 'Industrial' Typology

A.H. Maude Stores (1875) Meek's Building (1876) Meek's Elevator Building (1883) Oamaru Freezing Works (1886)